# The Equation of Continuity and the Equation of Motion in Cartesian, cylindrical, and spherical coordinates

## CM3110 Fall 2011 Faith A. Morrison

**Continuity Equation**, Cartesian coordinates

$$\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t} + \left( v_x \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial x} + v_y \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial y} + v_z \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial z} \right) + \rho \left( \frac{\partial v_x}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial v_y}{\partial y} + \frac{\partial v_z}{\partial z} \right) = 0$$

**Continuity Equation**, cylindrical coordinates

$$\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t} + \frac{1}{r}\frac{\partial (\rho r v_r)}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r}\frac{\partial (\rho v_\theta)}{\partial \theta} + \frac{\partial (\rho v_z)}{\partial z} = 0$$

**Continuity Equation**, spherical coordinates

$$\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t} + \frac{1}{r^2}\frac{\partial (\rho r^2 v_r)}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r \sin\theta}\frac{\partial (\rho v_\theta \sin\theta)}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r \sin\theta}\frac{\partial (\rho v_\phi)}{\partial \phi} = 0$$

**Equation of Motion** for an incompressible fluid, 3 components in Cartesian coordinates

$$\rho \left( \frac{\partial v_x}{\partial t} + v_x \frac{\partial v_x}{\partial x} + v_y \frac{\partial v_x}{\partial y} + v_z \frac{\partial v_x}{\partial z} \right) = -\frac{\partial P}{\partial x} + \left( \frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{xx}}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{yx}}{\partial y} + \frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{zx}}{\partial z} \right) + \rho g_x$$

$$\rho \left( \frac{\partial v_y}{\partial t} + v_x \frac{\partial v_y}{\partial x} + v_y \frac{\partial v_y}{\partial y} + v_z \frac{\partial v_y}{\partial z} \right) = -\frac{\partial P}{\partial y} + \left( \frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{xy}}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{yy}}{\partial y} + \frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{zy}}{\partial z} \right) + \rho g_y$$

$$\rho \left( \frac{\partial v_z}{\partial t} + v_x \frac{\partial v_z}{\partial x} + v_y \frac{\partial v_z}{\partial y} + v_z \frac{\partial v_z}{\partial z} \right) = -\frac{\partial P}{\partial z} + \left( \frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{xz}}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{yz}}{\partial y} + \frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{zz}}{\partial z} \right) + \rho g_z$$

**Equation of Motion** for an incompressible fluid, 3 components in cylindrical coordinates

$$\rho \left( \frac{\partial v_r}{\partial t} + v_r \frac{\partial v_r}{\partial r} + \frac{v_\theta}{r} \frac{\partial v_r}{\partial \theta} - \frac{v_\theta^2}{r} + v_z \frac{\partial v_r}{\partial z} \right) = -\frac{\partial P}{\partial r} + \left( \frac{1}{r}\frac{\partial (r \tilde{\tau}_{rr})}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r}\frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{\theta r}}{\partial \theta} - \frac{\tilde{\tau}_{\theta\theta}}{r} + \frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{zr}}{\partial z} \right) + \rho g_r$$

$$\rho \left( \frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial t} + v_r \frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial r} + \frac{v_\theta}{r} \frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial \theta} + \frac{v_\theta v_r}{r} + v_z \frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial z} \right) = -\frac{1}{r}\frac{\partial P}{\partial \theta} + \left( \frac{1}{r^2}\frac{\partial (r^2 \tilde{\tau}_{r\theta})}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r}\frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{\theta\theta}}{\partial \theta} + \frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{z\theta}}{\partial z} + \frac{\tilde{\tau}_{\theta r} - \tilde{\tau}_{r\theta}}{r} \right) + \rho g_\theta$$

$$\rho \left( \frac{\partial v_z}{\partial t} + v_r \frac{\partial v_z}{\partial r} + \frac{v_\theta}{r} \frac{\partial v_z}{\partial \theta} + v_z \frac{\partial v_z}{\partial z} \right) = -\frac{\partial P}{\partial z} + \left( \frac{1}{r}\frac{\partial (r \tilde{\tau}_{rz})}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r}\frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{\theta z}}{\partial \theta} + \frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{zz}}{\partial z} \right) + \rho g_z$$

**Equation of Motion** for an incompressible fluid, 3 components in spherical coordinates

$$\rho \left( \frac{\partial v_r}{\partial t} + v_r \frac{\partial v_r}{\partial r} + \frac{v_\theta}{r} \frac{\partial v_r}{\partial \theta} + \frac{v_\phi}{r \sin\theta} \frac{\partial v_r}{\partial \phi} - \frac{v_\theta^2 + v_\phi^2}{r} \right)$$

$$= -\frac{\partial P}{\partial r} + \left( \frac{1}{r^2}\frac{\partial (r^2 \tilde{\tau}_{rr})}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r \sin\theta}\frac{\partial (\tilde{\tau}_{\theta r} \sin\theta)}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r \sin\theta}\frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{\phi r}}{\partial \phi} - \frac{\tilde{\tau}_{\theta\theta} + \tilde{\tau}_{\phi\phi}}{r} \right) + \rho g_r$$

$$\rho \left( \frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial t} + v_r \frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial r} + \frac{v_\theta}{r} \frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial \theta} + \frac{v_\phi}{r \sin\theta} \frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial \phi} + \frac{v_r v_\theta}{r} - \frac{v_\phi^2 \cot\theta}{r} \right)$$

$$= -\frac{1}{r}\frac{\partial P}{\partial \theta} + \left( \frac{1}{r^3}\frac{\partial (r^3 \tilde{\tau}_{r\theta})}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r \sin\theta}\frac{\partial (\tilde{\tau}_{\theta\theta} \sin\theta)}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r \sin\theta}\frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{\phi\theta}}{\partial \phi} + \frac{\tilde{\tau}_{\theta r} - \tilde{\tau}_{r\theta}}{r} - \frac{\tilde{\tau}_{\phi\phi} \cot\theta}{r} \right) + \rho g_\theta$$

$$\rho \left( \frac{\partial v_\phi}{\partial t} + v_r \frac{\partial v_\phi}{\partial r} + \frac{v_\theta}{r} \frac{\partial v_\phi}{\partial \theta} + \frac{v_\phi}{r \sin\theta} \frac{\partial v_\phi}{\partial \phi} + \frac{v_r v_\phi}{r} + \frac{v_\phi v_\theta \cot\theta}{r} \right)$$

$$= -\frac{1}{r \sin\theta}\frac{\partial P}{\partial \phi} + \left( \frac{1}{r^3}\frac{\partial (r^3 \tilde{\tau}_{r\phi})}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r \sin\theta}\frac{\partial (\tilde{\tau}_{\theta\phi} \sin\theta)}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r \sin\theta}\frac{\partial \tilde{\tau}_{\phi\phi}}{\partial \phi} + \frac{\tilde{\tau}_{\phi r} - \tilde{\tau}_{r\phi}}{r} + \frac{\tilde{\tau}_{\phi\theta} \cot\theta}{r} \right) + \rho g_\phi$$

**Equation of Motion** for incompressible, Newtonian fluid (Navier-Stokes equation) 3 components in Cartesian coordinates

$$\rho\left(\frac{\partial v_x}{\partial t} + v_x\frac{\partial v_x}{\partial x} + v_y\frac{\partial v_x}{\partial y} + v_z\frac{\partial v_x}{\partial z}\right) = -\frac{\partial P}{\partial x} + \mu\left(\frac{\partial^2 v_x}{\partial x^2} + \frac{\partial^2 v_x}{\partial y^2} + \frac{\partial^2 v_x}{\partial z^2}\right) + \rho g_x$$

$$\rho\left(\frac{\partial v_y}{\partial t} + v_x\frac{\partial v_y}{\partial x} + v_y\frac{\partial v_y}{\partial y} + v_z\frac{\partial v_y}{\partial z}\right) = -\frac{\partial P}{\partial y} + \mu\left(\frac{\partial^2 v_y}{\partial x^2} + \frac{\partial^2 v_y}{\partial y^2} + \frac{\partial^2 v_y}{\partial z^2}\right) + \rho g_y$$

$$\rho\left(\frac{\partial v_z}{\partial t} + v_x\frac{\partial v_z}{\partial x} + v_y\frac{\partial v_z}{\partial y} + v_z\frac{\partial v_z}{\partial z}\right) = -\frac{\partial P}{\partial z} + \mu\left(\frac{\partial^2 v_z}{\partial x^2} + \frac{\partial^2 v_z}{\partial y^2} + \frac{\partial^2 v_z}{\partial z^2}\right) + \rho g_z$$

**Equation of Motion** for incompressible, Newtonian fluid (Navier-Stokes equation), 3 components in cylindrical coordinates

$$\rho\left(\frac{\partial v_r}{\partial t} + v_r\frac{\partial v_r}{\partial r} + \frac{v_\theta}{r}\frac{\partial v_r}{\partial \theta} - \frac{v_\theta^2}{r} + v_z\frac{\partial v_r}{\partial z}\right) = -\frac{\partial P}{\partial r} + \mu\left(\frac{\partial}{\partial r}\left(\frac{1}{r}\frac{\partial(rv_r)}{\partial r}\right) + \frac{1}{r^2}\frac{\partial^2 v_r}{\partial \theta^2} - \frac{2}{r^2}\frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial \theta} + \frac{\partial^2 v_r}{\partial z^2}\right) + \rho g_r$$

$$\rho\left(\frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial t} + v_r\frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial r} + \frac{v_\theta}{r}\frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial \theta} + \frac{v_r v_\theta}{r} + v_z\frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial z}\right) = -\frac{1}{r}\frac{\partial P}{\partial \theta} + \mu\left(\frac{\partial}{\partial r}\left(\frac{1}{r}\frac{\partial(rv_\theta)}{\partial r}\right) + \frac{1}{r^2}\frac{\partial^2 v_\theta}{\partial \theta^2} + \frac{2}{r^2}\frac{\partial v_r}{\partial \theta} + \frac{\partial^2 v_\theta}{\partial z^2}\right) + \rho g_\theta$$

$$\rho\left(\frac{\partial v_z}{\partial t} + v_r\frac{\partial v_z}{\partial r} + \frac{v_\theta}{r}\frac{\partial v_z}{\partial \theta} + v_z\frac{\partial v_z}{\partial z}\right) = -\frac{\partial P}{\partial z} + \mu\left(\frac{1}{r}\frac{\partial}{\partial r}\left(r\frac{\partial v_z}{\partial r}\right) + \frac{1}{r^2}\frac{\partial^2 v_z}{\partial \theta^2} + \frac{\partial^2 v_z}{\partial z^2}\right) + \rho g_z$$

**Equation of Motion** for incompressible, Newtonian fluid (Navier-Stokes equation), 3 components in spherical coordinates

$$\rho\left(\frac{\partial v_r}{\partial t} + v_r\frac{\partial v_r}{\partial r} + \frac{v_\theta}{r}\frac{\partial v_r}{\partial \theta} + \frac{v_\phi}{r\sin\theta}\frac{\partial v_r}{\partial \phi} - \frac{v_\theta^2 + v_\phi^2}{r}\right)$$

$$= -\frac{\partial P}{\partial r} + \mu\left(\frac{\partial}{\partial r}\left(\frac{1}{r^2}\frac{\partial}{\partial r}\left(r^2 v_r\right)\right) + \frac{1}{r^2\sin\theta}\frac{\partial}{\partial \theta}\left(\sin\theta\frac{\partial v_r}{\partial \theta}\right) + \frac{1}{r^2\sin^2\theta}\frac{\partial^2 v_r}{\partial \phi^2}\right.$$

$$\left. -\frac{2}{r^2\sin\theta}\frac{\partial}{\partial \theta}\left(v_\theta\sin\theta\right) - \frac{2}{r^2\sin\theta}\frac{\partial v_\phi}{\partial \phi}\right) + \rho g_r$$

$$\rho\left(\frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial t} + v_r\frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial r} + \frac{v_\theta}{r}\frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial \theta} + \frac{v_\phi}{r\sin\theta}\frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial \phi} + \frac{v_r v_\theta}{r} - \frac{v_\phi^2\cot\theta}{r}\right)$$

$$= -\frac{1}{r}\frac{\partial P}{\partial \theta} + \mu\left(\frac{1}{r^2}\frac{\partial}{\partial r}\left(r^2\frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial r}\right) + \frac{1}{r^2}\frac{\partial}{\partial \theta}\left(\frac{1}{\sin\theta}\frac{\partial}{\partial \theta}\left(v_\theta\sin\theta\right)\right) + \frac{1}{r^2\sin^2\theta}\frac{\partial^2 v_\theta}{\partial \phi^2}\right.$$

$$\left. +\frac{2}{r^2}\frac{\partial v_r}{\partial \theta} - \frac{2\cot\theta}{r^2\sin\theta}\frac{\partial v_\phi}{\partial \phi}\right) + \rho g_\theta$$

$$\rho\left(\frac{\partial v_\phi}{\partial t} + v_r\frac{\partial v_\phi}{\partial r} + \frac{v_\theta}{r}\frac{\partial v_\phi}{\partial \theta} + \frac{v_\phi}{r\sin\theta}\frac{\partial v_\phi}{\partial \phi} + \frac{v_r v_\phi}{r} + \frac{v_\phi v_\theta\cot\theta}{r}\right)$$

$$= -\frac{1}{r\sin\theta}\frac{\partial P}{\partial \phi} + \mu\left(\frac{1}{r^2}\frac{\partial}{\partial r}\left(r^2\frac{\partial v_\phi}{\partial r}\right) + \frac{1}{r^2}\frac{\partial}{\partial \theta}\left(\frac{1}{\sin\theta}\frac{\partial}{\partial \theta}\left(v_\phi\sin\theta\right)\right) + \frac{1}{r^2\sin^2\theta}\frac{\partial^2 v_\phi}{\partial \phi^2}\right.$$

$$\left. +\frac{2}{r^2\sin\theta}\frac{\partial v_r}{\partial \phi} + \frac{2\cot\theta}{r^2\sin\theta}\frac{\partial v_\theta}{\partial \phi}\right) + \rho g_\phi$$

Note: the $r$-component of the Navier-Stokes equation in spherical coordinates may be simplified by adding $0 = \frac{2}{r}\nabla\cdot\underline{v}$ to the component shown above. This term is zero due to the continuity equation (mass conservation). See Bird et. al.

References:

1. R. B. Bird, W. E. Stewart, and E. N. Lightfoot, *Transport Phenomena*, $2^{nd}$ edition, Wiley: NY, 2002.

2. R. B. Bird, R. C. Armstrong, and O. Hassager, *Dynamics of Polymeric Fluids: Volume 1 Fluid Mechanics*, Wiley: NY, 1987.